

September 14, 1983

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- :50 Cooke was born on a farm in Ireland. One of six siblings, he had few options except to emigrate. He came to the U.S. under the sponsorship of an uncle in California.
- 4:00 Cooke landed in the U.S. on July 12, 1920 and was processed at Ellis Island.
- 8:05 Arriving by train in Sacramento, he stayed at first with his uncle, who got him a job with the Southern Pacific Railroad. Cooke lived for the next eight years in boarding houses.
- 12:10 In 1926 Cooke was working for an ice company when Terry Mulligan, assistant Fire Chief, approached him at work and insisted that he join the A.O.H. (Ancient Order of Hibernians).
- 13:40 Hibernians used to meet in groups up to one hundred people. Beer and sandwiches were served and people would sing. Cooke also became involved in the A.O.H. sponsored St. Patrick's Day Ball.
- 17:15 Fund-raising Blarney Dances were held at the Odd Fellow's Hall once a week during this period.
- 23:45 Some Hibernians will talk about the Troubles [the Anglo-Irish conflict ca. 1914-1925] and some won't.
- 27:15 Terry Mulligan eventually became State President of the A.O.H. When Sacramento Fire Department Chief, he reformed working hours for the firemen [in 1943].

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- 1:40 Cooke joined the Sacramento Fire Department in 1927.
- 5:10 Fire Chief Terry Mulligan was an accomplished fundraiser. He helped the Sisters of Mercy and would sell up to five thousand tickets for the Fireman's Ball.
- 6:40 Cooke has been the treasurer of the A.O.H. in Sacramento for fifty years.
- 8:35 Terry Mulligan had connections with the Southern Pacific Railroad and once stored S.P. iron in a fire house where the captain was Irish and could be trusted.

## Index Side B (cont.)

- 12:10 Mulligan had never worked for the S.P. Before coming to Sacramento he had been in San Francisco since just after the Earthquake. There he had been involved in a tea and coffee business.
- 14:35 There were a number of Irishmen in the Sacramento Police Department. There was also a lot of graft and bootlegging in those days [the 1920s].
- 16:40 Cooke stays in contact with his Irish relatives and has returned to Ireland three times. He has a nephew retired from the S.P. in Los Angeles and a son in the Sacramento Police Department.
- 20:55 Cooke did not keep his Irish food habits because he lived in boarding houses here and had to eat what was served.
- 24:10 Cooke describes the 1927 Zellerbach Paper Company fire as his most dramatic fire fighting experience.
- 29:38 [end]

Index Side A

- O'Hare  
:55 O'Hare was born to Michael and "Minnie" Heaney O'Hare in Coorag, Newrytown, Ireland.
- 2:35 O'Hare's father owned eighteen acres of land and later expanded his holdings with money that the father earned working in the U.S. in Montana and Sacramento.
- 4:05 When Michael O'Hare came to Sacramento in 1921 he obtained a job at Black's Package Company.
- 6:05 O'Hare had trained to be a school master, but at the time of receiving his diploma he was required to give a vote of confidence to the King of England. He refused and became involved in the Irish Rebellion.
- 8:30 O'Hare took a year off from fighting to search for his father in America.
- 10:20 With the war over in Ireland, O'Hare wanted to travel, and so moved from Sacramento to McGill, Nevada, where he worked for a copper smelting company.
- 12:00 By 1925 he was head bookkeeper and married, at which point he returned to Sacramento to work for the Southern Pacific Railroad.
- 15:00 The Ancient Order of Hibernians, which O'Hare joined in 1931, kept the Irish together in Sacramento. O'Hare had initially been unsure about joining the A.O.H. because the organization's Irish branch was considered to be friendly to the British.
- 16:25 O'Hare describes Terry Mulligan and his involvement in the A.O.H.
- 18:45 In Sacramento the A.O.H. was a benevolent society which provided insurance for its members.
- 21:05 The A.O.H. raised money from dances for orphans and the Sisters of Mercy.
- 24:20 The A.O.H. has a plot at St. Joseph's cemetery.
- 25:00 The A.O.H. used to participate in the St. Parick's Day parade [in the nineteenth century].
- 28:00 Those Irish who emmigrated after 1916 were Sinn Fein and therefore more radical than the A.O.H., Board of Erin.

## Index Side B

- :30     O'Hare  
A.O.H. meetings usually ended with singing and  
accordion playing.
- 1:10     In the 1920s rebel songs, such as "The Soldier's Song"  
which became the Irish national anthem, were popular  
with the A.O.H.
- 2:60     Cooke  
James Cooke was born to Henry and Julia Fitzgerald Cooke  
on a forty acre farm in County Kerry, Ireland. In 1908  
at the age of thirteen, he was orphaned.
- 5:05     Cooke was often kept at home to help work the farm  
and eventually dropped out of school.
- 6:30     Cooke emigrated to the United States and in 1927  
joined the Sacramento Fire Department.
- 11:35     Only about fifteen of 130 men in the Fire Department  
were Irish at that time.
- 13:20     Cooke started as a hoseman and eventually became  
chief engineer.
- 16:10     Terry Mulligan personally enlisted Cooke into the A.O.H.
- 19:05     Cooke had spent a lot of time at the Y.M.C.A preparing  
for the Fire Department's athletic examination. [At this  
point in the interview he demonstrates a weight lifting  
test that he practiced]
- 21:00     Other parts of the test involved a quarter mile run  
and the carrying of a hundred pound sack of sand up  
a ladder. Cooke practiced at Southside Park sometimes.
- 26:30     Cooke speculates that the difficult exam kept many  
of the Irish out of the Fire Department. Many may  
also have had better jobs. He was asked by people  
to help them prepare for the test, but none passed it.
- 28:05     [end]